

Richard Green explains why ROBIN WON'T BE RUSHED

THE well-known singer/composer, but not so well-known drummer, organist, pianist, cellist, autoharpist and flugelhorn and viola player, Robin Gibb, sat in a large chair in an office high above bustling Christmassy Regent Street and said: "I never bite my fingernails and worry about what to do about a single."

"I choose, I don't let people come to me and say 'bring out a record,'" he insisted. "I don't think people will have forgotten me. I recorded a song before this one but I thought I could do something better."

It has been a long time since Robin released a single of his own. The last one was an immense hit and must have satisfied his ego after making the split from what was then the four Bee Gees.

He went on "I'm very impatient, if I have to do anything it must be done today. I like to develop a thing where it hasn't been developed. But I don't rush into things so I wouldn't rush into production."

Which explained a little more, I suppose. Then he talked about the business of writing and making records.

"I wrote three songs one night in my mind. I can write a complete song in my mind and never hear an instrument," he revealed, lighting another cigarette. "The first time I hear an instrument is in the studio."

A phrase

"The title for this one just came into my mind... you could be talking now and a phrase you use like 'and now today' or 'my word' or 'you stole the show' are titles right there."

"I don't think about titles but he could be talking and something will click right there. Then again, I never think of a song all the time. I may do a song and go back to it two days later. I do the stereo and mono reductions myself, that's what takes all the time."

Someone told me that on his new album, "Robin's Reign," he turned himself into a forty-piece choir for one track. Suspecting David Nixon-like goings-on, I pressed the point.

"Oh, that was for 'Lord Bless All Of It,' a carol type thing," he replied. "I first start on the organ — that took half an hour — then I said I'd like to do the choir. In the end I'd put about twenty-eight tracks down. After that I went into the control room."

Now that Robin has finally got a new single and his debut solo album out, how about some personal appearances in this country?

A concert

"When I do one it will be a concert," he told me, though the "when" sounded ominous. "I haven't done one because I haven't wanted. I'll use a thirty-piece orchestra and present to people exactly what is me, there will be no gimmicks."

This line led Robin to return to the singles theme and he said: "I wouldn't like to bring out a record so near another. I'm not a person who thinks 'Hello,' 'Saved By The Bell' is dropping out, I must do another." I like to give them the better of me."

He has some definite ideas about musical phases and he went through underground, reggae and rock.

"The record-buying public ranges between the ages of eighteen and thirty-seven," he stated. "There are no longer bobbysoxers, screams and autograph books, that went out with National Service."

"Old rock and roll, when you hear it on the air today, is a far cry from what passes as it today. People would rather save up and buy an LP, that is a single plus a lot of others, if they like an artist. The Underground are marketing to their public, it's no good to them to have a single, unless it has a

I must
give of
my best



commercial content.

"The LPs are fantastically good but if you could get both together it would be beautiful. Jethro Tull has had two commercial singles but there is no comparison between them and his albums. The singles are to establish himself with people who don't know he exists on albums."

"Blue beat can't exist in its original form. It's necessary for an artist to change for the sake of their name and LP sales, they have to do a commercial single."

"Blue beat cannot appeal to a majority, folk took years to appeal to a majority but now ninety per cent of pop music is folk. Blue beat has got to be tested by time to see if it can be accepted."

Robin admits to having a liking for Peter, Paul and Mary, the Beatles and Skeeter Davis but denies that they have influenced him.

"Obviously people influenced me when I started but I can't say they do now. I always go into myself now and write exactly according to my moods. All catch phrases have been used, I just sing the way I would sing."

A musical?

We have read a good deal about Robin's musicals — "Scrooge" and "Henry VIII." What is the position now?

"I'm starting work on them again," he told me. "I didn't want anyone to have them when there was work to be done on them. There was still a legal thing going on."

"I didn't want any scandal. I haven't done any scenery, I've done the music and the story surrounding it, I can't do anything with my hands."

Robin would like to secure Harry Secombe for the part of Henry VIII, but doesn't know about Scrooge. My suggestion of a well known publicist was met with a gale of laughter but not adopted. Any suggestions, folks?